ABSTRACT

A method and system for vending products from a defined area, such as a micro-warehouse with a door. The method includes fitting each product with a radio frequency identification tag, positioning the plurality of products in a micro-warehouse, sensing opening and closing of the micro-warehouse door, scanning the plurality of products in the micro-warehouse upon sensing closing of the door to determine the number and type of products in the micro-warehouse, generating a message based on the number and type of products in the micro-warehouse, transmitting the message to a remote processor or server, and maintaining an inventory in the remote processor based on the message.

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The system is designed to be accessed by authorized individuals possessing some type of code or identifying mechanism. The micro-warehouses may be cabinets, refrigerators, secured rooms, or similar storage units or areas. Each micro-warehouse has an output device such as a light or display, a door, an antenna mounted on or in the micro-warehouse, and a controller coupled to the antenna. Using a signal from the antenna or other input device, the controller is operable to check the identity of the individual accessing the micro-warehouse. If the user is authorized, the controller opens the door and the user may remove products from the micro-warehouse. Once the user closes the door, the controller performs a scan of the products remaining in the micro-warehouse to determine the identity of each of the products. The controller then generates a message including the identity of each of the products, and sends that message to the server.

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